



Laboratory begins environmental sampling in townsite

September 25, 2008



Vicinity of Upper LA Canyon Investigated as Part of NMED Consent Order

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, September 25, 2008—Environmental sampling, conducted on behalf of Los Alamos National Laboratory in the town of Los Alamos near upper Los Alamos Canyon, has begun. Known as the Upper Los Alamos Canyon Project, this effort is an environmental assessment of areas that have been or could have been affected by Laboratory operations from the days of the Manhattan Project to the early 1970s.

The Upper Los Alamos Canyon Project encompasses the Los Alamos townsite area in the vicinity of Los Alamos Canyon, from DP Road to the Los Alamos County

Research Park area. The project will entail sampling downtown, south of Central Avenue, including locations near Ashley Pond. The effort also will cover Trinity Drive and townsite areas immediately to the south.

Because most portions of the Upper Los Alamos Canyon area have been investigated in the past, and soil removed from some areas, the Laboratory does not expect to find contaminants at levels that pose a potential unacceptable risk to human health or the environment. As announced last spring, should sample results indicate that residual contamination does pose a potential unacceptable risk, those areas will be remediated in coordination with the New Mexico Environment Department and the U.S. Department of Energy.

The contract to perform sampling, the primary activity associated with the project, was awarded this summer to Los Alamos Technical Associates (LATA), an engineering, scientific, and technical services company.

LATA personnel, under the direction of Laboratory project manager Becky Coel-Roback, will take soil samples—on the surface and at depth—from numerous locations, including private property. These locations have been selected based on known historical Laboratory operations. The samples will be analyzed by a qualified independent laboratory and the results made public.

Over the past several months, Coel-Roback has met with area residents and property owners to explain the work program and answer questions.

In addition to provisions for telephone and e-mail communications between members of the public and project staff, project personnel will be available to meet at LATA's downtown offices, 999 Central Avenue, Suite 300. Starting immediately, members of the public may drop by between 4 and 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Thursdays.

For more information about the Upper Los Alamos Canyon Project, see the project Web site: http://www.lanl.gov/environment/cleanup/upper_la.shtml.

The project fulfills requirements of the 2005 Consent Order between the New Mexico Environment Department, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the Laboratory.

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